1: Cunningham G-3 (1846-47) 1854 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

west by Lahul and Kullu, on the south by Kanáwar, and on the east by the Chinese district of Chumurti. It comprises the whole valley of the Spiti river, from its source to the junction of the Para, a length of about 64 miles. Its mean length is not more than 52 miles, and its mean breadth only 36 miles, which give an area of about 1,900 square miles. The mean elevation of the inhabited parts, as determined by the heights of eight camps, is 12,986 feet.

Lahul (or Lho-yul, the "southern district") is bounded on the north by Zanskar and Rukchu, on the west by Káshtwár, on the south by Chamba and Kullu, and on the east by Spiti. It comprises the valleys of the Chandra and Bhaga rivers, as well as that of the Chandra-Bhaga or united stream as far as Treloknáth, below which the people are of Hindu race and religion, with but little admixture of Tibetan blood. With the single exception of the valley of the Indus, Lahul possesses more cultivable land, and a less rigorous climate than any of the other districts of Ladák. There the currant and the gooseberry are both found wild, and in the lower parts of the valley towards Treloknáth the mountain slopes are covered with fir trees. Like Kanáwar, Lahul partakes somewhat of the climate and productions of India as well as of those of Tibet. The people, their language, and their dwellings are mostly Tibetan, but with a strong mixture of Indian origin. Lahul is 68 miles in length by 34 in breadth, which give an area of 2,312 square miles. The mean elevation of its inhabited parts, as determined by the heights of nine camps, is 11,063 feet.

The following table of the extent and mean elevation

000 it was there that we stopped for lunch. In this grove camel caravans were repacking for the trek downstream to Khargil. Farmers were gathered under the trees, gleaning news from the men of the caravans. Mule trains, carrying produce between the villages up and down the Indus in the manner of our locals, rested
132 in the shade. It was cool in the shade but blistering in the sun. Though this stretch of the Indus lay over eleven thousand feet high, the daytime temperature marched well over 100 degrees; and on some days it went into the 130's. The summer heat is so great and so sustained that it brings grain to maturity in two months' time.

487 The trail, after crossing the Indus, divides, one fork going south along the river's edge to Spitok, Khalatse, and Khargil, the other turning north to Leh, the Khardong Pass (18,380 feet), and Yarkand, an ancient trading center of Sinkiang. We took the right fork
137 and in four miles came to Leh. This approach to Leh is dreary and desolate. In early summer there are buttercups, columbine (called asses' sugar), and clematis in this area. Later come the vetches, lavender, bluebells, and cornflowers. There are great stands of iris, which is sometimes stacked and dried for winter fodder. These flowers bring color to the land. But by mid-August the gaiety is gone. The flush of light green from the tender spring grass has also passed. Now the slopes and nullas are dry and sear.

•134 Monotonous browns and grays fill every stretch with desolation. Each view shows the end product of erosion. The ground has been endlessly pounded by the quick feet of goats and sheep; the protective covering of the earth has been eaten off or washed away; there is no topsoil left; every ravine tells the story of harsh runoffs of water; the fields and slopes are strewn with countless rocks, pitched up by the slow working of frost or exposed by the cutting wind that whines ceaselessly along the Indus. There is no shade, no touch of life, no bush, no scattered hummocks of the *dama* bush. There are distant snow-capped peaks to lift the heart; but there are only heat and dust and rubble underfoot.

14: Asboe M-3 (no date) 1947 AJ4 W. Tibetans AJ4

476 receives half the crop in return for working the fields, the landowner being 506 responsible for the water-supply and the payment of land revenue. 436

427 In Ladakh, as well as in Tibet proper, where the country to a large extent is sterile, the Malthusian law, by which "there is a tendency on the 161 part of the population to increase at a greater ratio than its power of pro- 595 ducing food," actually operates. There have been writers who with great 181 plausibility advanced the view that the practice of fraternal polyandry (plurality of husbands) was intended to combat this tendency. It is more likely, however, that the custom of polyandry derives its origin from a crude state of society and originally had no such economic significance. On the other hand, it is quite possible to conceive of a condition of affairs in this arid and sandy country likely to cause widespread famine or continual warfare. Actually neither occurs, for, together with polyandry, groups of families live in one or more houses attached to the paternal property. Moreover, Tibetans generally are not warlike, and the universal virtue of hospitality and the giving of alms to all and sundry acts as a kind of safety valve against famine and war.

241 Farming activities at the outset are mildly controlled by religious 787 sanctions, and the peasants consult the oracle dictated by the Buddhist 805 priesthood as regards the auspicious moment at which farming operations may proceed. In practice, however, the auspicious time for ploughing and seeding coincides with the time at which the sun strikes certain prominent mountain peaks or cliffs at sunrise, meridian, or sunset. For [114] instance, in a village in which I lived for ten years, a chart of the time of day was drawn up covering a whole year, based on the moment when the sun set over a particular snow-capped peak. The local astrologer—usually a lama or Buddhist priest—also compiles a calendar which serves as a guide to the farmers who can read.

241 In spite of the aridity of the country and the lack of moisture, the 134 harvests of Ladakh cannot be said to be insufficient to feed the people. The soil, however unpromising, has the peculiarity of yielding good crops year after year without its being allowed to lie fallow and without, in many cases, any attempt to cultivate an alternation of crops.

241 When a farmer contemplates opening up waste land he must first clear the ground of obstructions, such as rocks, stones, and rough grasses, and then contrive to level the surface. Everywhere you see fields constructed in the form of terraces along the sides of the hills, the stones and top layer of the earth being brought down from a higher to a lower level so as to form a wall or buttress. These parallel terraces of levelled-out land are supplied with water conducted in channels from a mountain torrent caused through the melting of glaciers or accumulations of snow. Another ingenious device for obtaining what will one day become arable land is that of building stone dikes across the sloping sides of mountains near their base. These are constructed by the peasants to assist the deposit of soil and gravel by the melting snows. They are left for years and sometimes generations for the operation of nature in preparation for the labour of man, so that in due course a sterile declivity becomes an accessible flight of terraces of cultivation.

The soil thus reclaimed from the stony and barren mountain sides has

24:Peter E-5 (1938)1963 AJ4 West Tibetans AJ4
Ladak

105 423 651 for the payment of the tax. The size of the holding or the quality of the soil is not taken into consideration, and this has led to complaints of unjust imposition, which the government has tried in the past to remedy. Cash is the medium in which taxes are paid, but along the Trade Route, grain and wood are often collected by the authorities instead, as these products are badly needed by the traders on their way to and from Central Asia. In 1938, revenue totalled Rs. 50,823.

105 423 429 The *zhing-k'ham* is in every way comparable to the *khalsa khotis* of Lahul, which are really *jeolas* or allotments by the State to individuals as we have seen (see p. 309). They are unlimited in time and the tenant-occupant cannot be evicted. As it is said in Ladak, he will have his holding "until the Kang-ri (*Gangs-ri*) glacier melts", or "until the crow turns white", or "until Tso Mapan (Lake Manasarowar) dries up", or "until the rocks grow hair", or "until the rivers run uphill', or again "until the pencil cedar loses its leaves".

A tenant-occupant is allowed to sub-let his holding to another tenant, and he can do this also in perpetuity, so that the sub-tenant cannot be evicted either. These two types of tenancy, the one from the State and the other from a tenant of the latter, are called tenancy with occupation. They are to be distinguished from tenancy without occupation, which is limited in time, and from which the tenant can be evicted. Usually, a fixed time for the tenancy is decided upon in advance if it is to be of the limited type and after a certain date the temporary holder has no longer any right of occupation. Mohammedans all over Ladak can be evicted even from holdings in which there is tenancy with occupation if the family unit has no male issue, in which case, the holding either reverts to the State's tenant, or to the State, whichever the case may be. Tenancy with occupation in the case of Buddhists is hereditary, and a female heir in no way compromises the succession and the ownership of the holding, as we shall see.

105 241 [134] Barley, wheat, peas, beans, are among the principal crops grown in Ladak in the spring. In the autumn, buckwheat, millet and turnips are cultivated, together with a certain amount of fodder grasses for the cattle. The soil is sandy nearly everywhere, and careful manuring is essential. Earth is often brought from the hill-sides for top-dressing of the fields, and it is not uncommon to see this being done when the snow is still lying on the ground, in order to hasten the thaw. Ploughing [231] is done with *dzos* (hybrids of yak and cow), which, together with ordinary cattle and ponies, constitute the domestic animals to be found in Ladak. The sexes divide agricultural work among themselves in such

2: Gervis T-3 (no date) 1954 AV1 Kashmir
W. Tibetans AJ 4

793 361 reason for the existence of so many monasteries always inhabited and one to each town or village of reasonable size.

● 134 241 Ladakh is a land of extreme barrenness. If the population were permitted to increase the people would starve, for not only are they unable to grow sufficient to support more mouths than are already there, but with communications so bad, little can be 595 imported. In order to retain the population at its present level, since they are unable to live for long in other climates after all their lives breathing the rarer air of the mountains, as in Tibet, polyandry has become the custom of the land, and has been so from time immemorial, having proved a powerful check on the population, the greater percentage of which are women.

The system of polyandry is confined to brothers, each family having but one wife, and although the usual number of husbands is three, four or even five are not unknown. Occasionally one hears of a "brother" being adopted at the demand of the wife, and rather than lose their wife, the husbands have to agree to her lover becoming one of them. On no account can a family have more than one wife, so that the unfortunate 428 younger brothers in a large one have to suffer. The eldest son inherits the family estate as soon as he marries; it is his duty then to provide for his parents, grandparents and unmarried sisters, in addition to which he has to support those brothers who share his wife. This system of inheritance keeps the property intact, for there is never more than one heir and the patrimony is never divided.

428 582 595 If there is no son, then the property of the family is inherited by the daughter who is free to marry any man she wishes, even to have an experimental marriage with a younger son—this is done by a State-recognised religious ceremony. And she can divorce him after giving him a small present, say a sheep, if after a few days' trial he does not come up to her expectations. Besides all this she may choose several husbands if she so desires, all becoming the "brothers" of her first husband, who dare not protest for fear of being sacked. One can imagine the power an heiress has in her hands and how carefully the husband has to conduct himself that he is not dismissed. The 586 husband of an heiress is called a "magpa". He, poor fellow, is unable to leave his heiress wife unless he can prove the grossest